

# Chapter 1210: Architectural Standards

## **1210.01 PURPOSE (NEW)**

---

The purpose of this chapter is to encourage development that contributes to the City of Middletown's physical character in appropriate ways. The architectural design of residential and nonresidential development, particularly large-scale developments, determines much of the character and attractiveness along the thoroughfares of the City, and the gateways to the community.

## **1210.02 APPLICABILITY AND WAIVER**

---

- (a) The standards of this chapter shall apply to all new buildings and the expansion of existing buildings unless otherwise specified.
- (b) Buildings in the I-1 and I-2 Districts shall be exempt from this chapter.
- (c) The ARB shall have the authority to waive any or all provisions of this chapter with respect to infill where the proposed dwelling is on a lot located in a block that is more than 50 percent developed.

## **1210.03 ARCHITECTURAL STANDARDS FOR RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS**

---

The standards of this section apply to all residential principal and accessory buildings unless otherwise stated.

- (a) **Architectural Standards and Review for New Single-, Two-, Three-, and Four-Family Dwellings (Revised Chapter 1225)**
  - (1) **Applicability**
    - A. The standards of this subsection apply to all single, two-, three- and multi-family dwellings with four dwelling units for which building permit applications are filed after the effective date of this code.
    - B. No building permit shall be issued without a determination from the Architectural Review Board (ARB) of compliance with the standards set forth in this section with the following exceptions:
      - i. The ARB may review subdivisions and approve the architectural standards for an entire subdivision. If the ARB reviews and approves architectural standards for a subdivision, the Development Code Administrator may issue a certificate of zoning compliance for any individual dwelling that is in compliance with the ARB approval.

- ii. The Development Code Administrator may review the architectural standards for single-family, two-family, and three-family dwellings on lots within a single block where over 80 percent of the lots within the block are occupied by existing dwellings constructed prior to the effective date of this code. ARB review and approval shall not be required in these infill development applications.

## **(2) Architectural Standards**

### **A. Building Orientation**

- i. The main entrance of any residential building shall be oriented toward a public street.
- ii. For corner lots in residential zoning districts, a dwelling unit may be oriented toward the intersection of the two streets.

### **B. Building Materials**

- i. The first above-ground story of a residential dwelling shall have facades constructed of stone, brick, wood, stucco, cultured stone, cement siding, or hardy plank when such facades are visible from a public street.
- ii. All other exterior walls areas of the dwelling may be constructed of other code approved building materials.
- iii. Areas excluded from the building material requirements stated above are limited to any exterior wall areas of the dwelling where normal building practices prohibit the use of the material stated above including gas fireplace insert cantilevers, gables, overhangs, downspout and gutters, kitchen and other bays and other types of protrusions for which it is not reasonably practical to use the materials stated above.
- iv. All siding shall be either horizontal or vertical in placement.
- v. All potential below grade living areas shall be constructed with poured concrete walls.

### **C. Roofs and Projections**

- i. Roof pitch shall have a minimum five-twelves pitched roof design, including the roof area located over the garage.
- ii. The roof area located over the porch and entrance portions of the dwelling may be constructed using a minimum of four-twelves pitched roof design. Roofing materials shall be compatible with the design and style of the dwelling unit and development.

- iii. A minimum overhang of 12 inches shall be provided over all faces of the exterior walls of a dwelling. The material of such projections shall be constructed of durable and maintenance-free materials. The entire exterior areas of chimneys used for masonry, wood-burning open flame fireplaces shall be constructed of the exterior materials provided for in Section [1210.03\(a\)\(2\)B](#).
- iv. No horizontal plane on ground floor street-facing building frontage shall continue over 24 feet in length without being broken into different planes. Any sidewalls exceeding 30 feet in length shall be broken into different planes or be substantially broken with doors, windows, or a variety of siding materials.

**D. Windows and Doors**

No dwelling shall be constructed with aluminum windows or aluminum primary doors. Aluminum clad and vinyl clad windows and garage doors are permitted.

**E. Mass and Scale**

- i. No principal building shall be constructed where the front facade is more than 20 percent wider or 20 percent narrower than the average width of principal buildings along the same block face when more than half of the lots along the block face are occupied by existing structures.
- ii. The front façade of the principal building is set back from the front line an amount equal to or within 20 percent of the average setback of all other buildings along the same block face. See [Figure 1210-A](#).

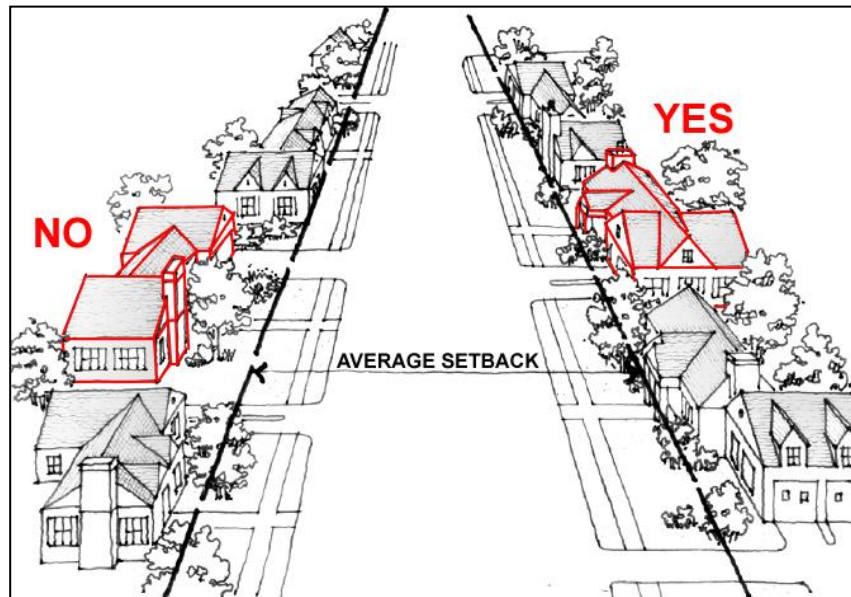


Figure 1210-A: The new construction (outlined in red) on the right demonstrates appropriate average setbacks. The dwelling outlined in red on the left has a front setback that is too deep.

- iii. In the case of the complete redevelopment of entire block or block face, the minimum front yard setback shall be within 20 percent of the average setback of the structures that previously existed on the applicable block face or the average setback of adjacent block faces.
- iv. Street-facing garages shall not comprise more than 50% of the ground floor building frontages. Any garage with more than two car parking capacity should not directly face onto any street. It is recommended that any garage with more than two car parking capacity should have the sidewall facing onto the street.
- v. For all new subdivisions, the applicant shall provide sufficient information to demonstrate a variety of base architectural styles or models dependent on the size of the subdivision in accordance with [Table 1210-1](#).

TABLE 1210-1: VARIETY OF RESIDENTIAL STYLES	
PROPOSED NUMBER OF LOTS	NUMBER OF BASE MODELS/STYLES
Less than 20	2
21 to 50	4
51 to 100	8
More than 100	$8 + (0.08 \times \# \text{ lots over } 100)$ , rounded to the nearest whole number

**F. Utility Boxes**

- i. All utility boxes located in the front yard shall be screened from public view with landscaping material, to the maximum extent feasible, as permitted by the utility company.
- ii. Large utility structures shall be subject to Section [1204.08\(f\)\(2\)](#), regardless if they are located in a subdivision or are on a lot subject to a certificate of zoning compliance.

**(b) Architectural Standards for Multi-Family Dwellings with Over Four Dwelling Units (New)**

**(1) Applicability**

- A.** The standards of this section shall apply to all multi-family dwellings that have more than four dwelling units.
- B.** No building permit shall be issued without a determination from the Architectural Review Board (ARB) of compliance with the standards set forth herein.

**(2) Architectural Standards**

- A.** In addition to the standards set forth herein for multi-family dwellings, all multi-family dwellings with over four units shall be subject to the following:
  - i. [1210.03\(a\)\(2\)A: Building Orientation](#);
  - ii. [1210.03\(a\)\(2\)B: Building Materials](#);
  - iii. [1210.03\(a\)\(2\)D: Windows and Doors](#); and
  - iv. [1210.03\(a\)\(2\)F: Utility Boxes](#).

**B. Architectural Features**

- i. At least three of the following design features shall be provided on the front façade of each dwelling unit with frontage on a public street:
  - a. One or more dormer windows or cupolas;
  - b. A recessed entrance;
  - c. A covered porch or balcony;
  - d. Pillars, posts, or pilasters;
  - e. One or more bay windows with a minimum of 12 inch projection from the façade plane;
  - f. A parapet wall with an articulated design, which entails design variation rather than a simple rectilinear form; or
  - g. Multiple windows with a minimum of four inch wide trim.

- ii. To the maximum extent practicable, all roof vents, pipes, antennas, satellite dishes, and other roof penetrations and equipment (except chimneys) shall be located on the rear elevations or configured to have a minimal visual impact as seen from the street. See Section [1216.10](#).



*Figure 1210-B: Illustrative example of acceptable architectural design for multi-family dwellings*



*Figure 1210-C: Illustrative example of unacceptable architectural design for multi-family dwellings*

**(c) Residential Architectural Review (Revised 1225.04)**

- (1)** Whenever an application for a preliminary subdivision plat or a certificate of zoning compliance is submitted related to development subject to this section, it shall be accompanied by architectural elevations or similar documents illustrating the facades of the proposed dwellings in order to demonstrate compliance with this chapter.

- (2) The Development Code Administrator shall forward the submitted information to the ARB for their review and decision on compliance with this chapter. Such review shall be completed within 15 days of submission of the drawings.
- (3) The ARB shall provide a written determination of compliance with the requirements with this chapter.
- (4) The ARB shall have the authority to waive the provisions of this chapter provided that the intent of this chapter is upheld and if the applicant clearly demonstrates that the strict enforcement of these provisions causes undue hardship and that an extraordinary circumstance exists which would not be found elsewhere in the community.
- (5) Any individual aggrieved by a decision of the ARB regarding an interpretation or design involving this chapter shall, within 30 calendar days from the date of the ARB's decision, file an appeal to the Planning Commission. The appeal shall be heard on the next available Planning Commission agenda.

#### **1210.04 DESIGN STANDARDS FOR NONRESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT**

---

##### **(a) Applicability**

- (1) Unless otherwise specified, the standards of this section shall apply to:
  - A. All new construction of nonresidential buildings (principal and accessory) in a residential zoning district;
  - B. All new construction of principal buildings in the O-1, O-2, B-1, B-2, B-3, and PI Districts;
  - C. All new construction of principal buildings in the UC and BC Districts, including all subdistricts;
  - D. All new construction accessory buildings related to a nonresidential use that are visible from a public street; and
  - E. The expansion or exterior alteration of existing buildings otherwise subject to this section.
- (2) For the purposes of this section, nonresidential buildings shall include any mixed-use buildings that may have a residential component.

##### **(b) Requirements for New Construction**

###### **(1) New Construction in the UC District**

- A. In addition to any specific requirements identified in this section, new construction and building renovations in the UC District shall follow the guidelines established in the *Downtown Middletown Design Guidelines for New Construction and Building Renovation*.
- B. In a case of a conflict between the *Downtown Middletown Design Guidelines for New Construction and Building Renovation* and this code, the guidelines shall control.

**(2) Building Orientation and Entrances**

- A.** Buildings shall generally be parallel to the street they front, unless an alternate orientation is consistent with existing adjacent development along the same block face.
- B.** The primary building frontage shall incorporate at least one main entrance door.
- C.** Buildings located at the intersection of two streets may orient a main entrance toward the corner.
- D.** Service entries shall not be permitted along any façade that faces a street.
- E.** For buildings that are part of a large-scale development with internal driveways, buildings may be oriented toward the private driveways in the interior of the development if none of the building's facades has frontage on a public street.
- F.** Main entrances shall be designed to include at least two of the following design features:
  - i. Canopies/porticos above the entrance;
  - ii. Roof overhangs above the entrance;
  - iii. Entry recesses/projections;
  - iv. Arcades that are physically integrated with the entrance;
  - v. Raised corniced parapets above the entrance;
  - vi. Gabled roof forms or arches above the entrance;
  - vii. Outdoor plaza adjacent to the entrance having seating and a minimum depth of 20 feet;
  - viii. Display windows that are directly adjacent to the entrance;
  - ix. Architectural details, such as tile work and moldings, that are integrated into the building structure and design and are above and/or directly adjacent to the entrance; or
  - x. Similar features that distinguish the entrance as the main entrance.

**(3) Building Materials**

- A.** All building façades that face a public street, except those in the UC District, shall be constructed of the following materials:
  - i. Stone, brick, wood, stucco, cultured stone, cement board, ceramic tile, ceramic block, or exterior insulation finish system (E.I.F.S.).
  - ii. Architectural metal is permitted, provided that it occupies no more than 10 percent of the façade area and that all fasteners are concealed.



- iii. This subsection shall not be construed to prohibit metal roofs, flashing, or high-quality metal siding such as copper, bronze, or other decorative metal as determined by the Development Code Administrator.<sup>9</sup>
- B.** All building façades that face a public street in the UC District (all subdistricts) shall be constructed of the following materials:
  - i. Brick, stone, painted lap cement fiberboard and stucco shall be the primary materials on each facade.
  - ii. Natural wood clapboard, wood board and batten, wood shingles, vinyl, aluminum, or steel siding may be permitted as secondary materials as permitted by fire code ratings. For the purposes of this standard, secondary shall mean less than 50 percent.<sup>10</sup>
  - iii. Visible roofing materials to be used are dimensional asphalt, slate, tile, or standing seam.

**(4) Facade Design and Mass (New)<sup>11</sup>**

- A.** All architectural elevations of principal buildings shall consist of a base, a body, and a cap as described below (See [Figure 1210-D.](#)). The height requirements for the base, body and cap shall apply in all districts except the UC District. The height of the base, body and cap in the UC District shall be compatible with the predominant pattern found on the same block as the building subject to review.

---

<sup>9</sup> This language was added to the building material requirements.

<sup>10</sup> We have added the 50% language to clarify “secondary” but the percentage can be modified.

<sup>11</sup> Added this as it is becoming increasingly common in nonresidential design requirements.

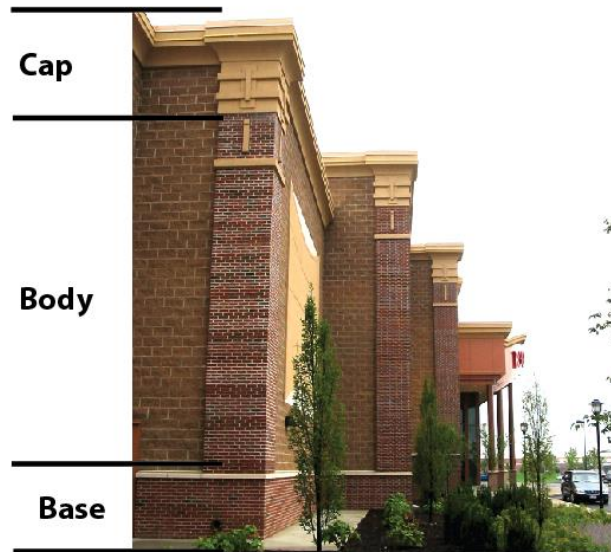


Figure 1210-D: Image of a building with a clear, base, body, and cap.

- i. The base shall occupy the lowest portion of the elevation, and shall have a height no less than eight percent of the average wall height.
  - ii. The body shall occupy the middle portion of the elevation, and shall have a height no less than 60 percent of the average wall height.
  - iii. The cap shall occupy the highest portion of the elevation, excluding the roof, and shall have a height no less than eight percent of the average wall height, not to exceed the height of the base.
- B.** The cap shall consist of at least one of the following architectural features:
- i. A cornice;
  - ii. A parapet;
  - iii. An awning;
  - iv. A canopy; or
  - v. Eaves.
- C.** The base and cap shall be clearly distinguishable from the body through changes in color, material, pattern, profile, or texture.
- (5) Façade Variation**
- A.** All façades that have frontage along a public street that is more than 50 feet in length shall incorporate one of the methods of façade variation identified in Subsection B below at a minimum of every 30 feet along the full length of the façade.

## B. Façade Variation Options

- i. A wall offset of at least two feet in depth (projections or recesses) and 20 feet in width;
- ii. A change in building materials or color;
- iii. A pilaster or pier having a minimum depth of one foot, minimum width of one foot, and a minimum height of 80 percent of the façade's height.



Figure 1210-E: Illustration of façade treatments such as pilasters, projections, and material changes to provide a visual façade offset.<sup>12</sup>

## (6) Wall Openings (Doors and Windows)<sup>13</sup>

- A. Blank walls, those devoid of openings such as windows and transparent doors, shall be prohibited on any façade that faces a public street.
- B. Building facades that face a public street in the BC-I and BC-H Sub-districts shall contain glass windows and doors that occupy a minimum of 30 percent of the first floor façade's wall surface area and 25 percent of each upper floor wall surface area. In the remaining BC sub-districts, any façade that faces a public street shall contain glass windows and doors that occupy a minimum of 25 percent of the total wall surface area.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>12</sup> We will update and reinsert a line drawing to illustrate the façade variation requirement that is in the current code.

<sup>13</sup> We will include updated graphics for these requirements.

<sup>14</sup> We will include new graphics for this section.

- C. Building facades that face a public street in the UC District shall contain glass windows and doors that occupy a minimum of 60 percent of the first floor façade's wall surface area between the height of two and ten feet above the nearest sidewalk grade. Such glass shall provide a view into the interior of the building a minimum distance of four feet. This requirement shall only apply to the building façade that faces the largest street. The transparency requirement of this section shall apply a distance of ten feet back from such street on any secondary street frontage.<sup>15</sup>
- D. A maximum of 20 percent of the windows that can be seen from all public rights-of-way, excluding alleys, may be opaque, including spandrel glass except in the UC District where such glass is prohibited.

**(7) Awnings**

- A. Where awnings or canopies are proposed, the awning or canopy shall not conceal architectural features of the building to which it is attached.
- B. Awning and canopy colors and materials must complement the colors and materials of the building to which the awning is attached.

**(8) Roof Design**

- A. The height of any pitched roof shall not exceed one-half of the overall building height.
- B. **Roof Line Changes**
  - i. Roofline changes shall include changes in roof planes or changes in the top of a parapet wall, such as extending the top of pilasters above the top of the parapet wall.
  - ii. When roofline changes are included on a façade that incorporates wall offsets or material or color changes, roof line changes shall be vertically aligned with the corresponding wall offset or material or color changes. See [Figure 1210-F](#).

---

<sup>15</sup> We will add a graphic for this requirement. It is from the UC District but may be difficult for the average user to understand.



*Figure 1210-F: Roofline changes shall be aligned with corresponding wall offsets and/or material or color changes.*

**C. Flat Roofs**

- i. When flat roofs are used, parapet walls with three-dimensional cornice treatments shall conceal them. The cornice shall include a perpendicular projection a minimum of eight inches from the parapet façade plane.
- ii. Thin parapets that extend more than two feet above the roof and have a depth of less than two feet from the façade surface, are prohibited.

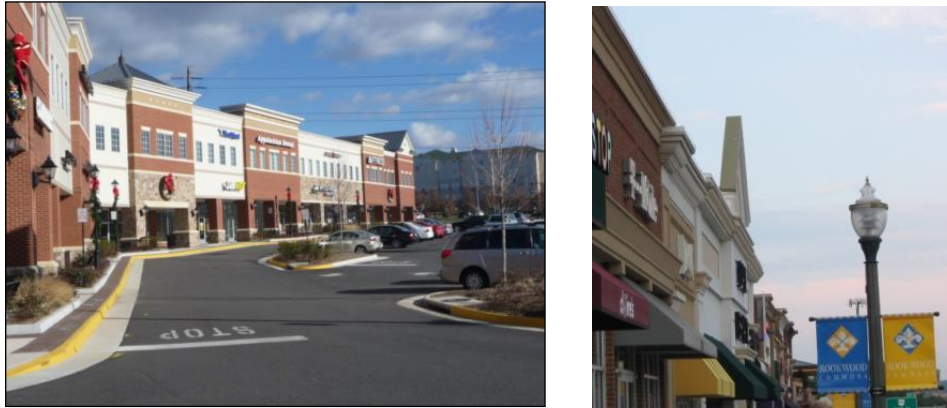


Figure 1210-G: Parapet walls with cornice treatments are used to disguise flat roofs. The image on the right illustrates a tall, thin parapet wall that is prohibited.

### (9) Mechanical Equipment

- A. Wall mounted mechanical, electrical, communication equipment, downspouts, gutters, service doors, and other building-mounted utility fixtures, shall be painted and maintained to match the building or be screened from view.
- B. Mechanical equipment such as transformers and HVAC units shall not be located in front yards.
- C. All mechanical equipment, including both ground-mounted and roof-mounted equipment, shall be screened from view from adjacent public and private rights-of-way, as well as from all property zoned or used for residential purposes.

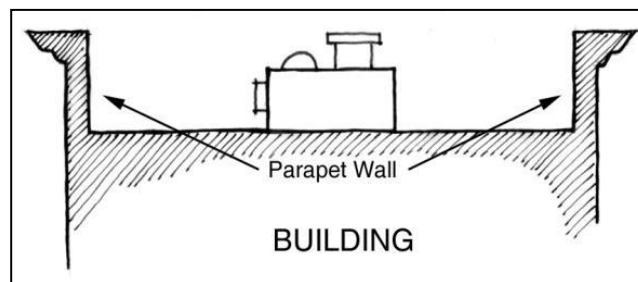


Figure 1210-H: Example of how parapet walls are utilized to screen roof mounted mechanical equipment.

- D. Screening elements shall include walls (same material and color as principal structure), landscaping, mounds, parapets or enclosures constructed of the same materials used on the majority of the principal structure or any combination.
- E. Mechanical equipment is also subject to Section [1216.10](#).